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[642] [701] Art. 16a. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has its own Republican military formations.

[646] Art. 16b. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements and exchange diplomatic and consular representatives with them.

Art. 17. The laws of the USSR are binding within the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

● [641] Art. 18. Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR is a citizen of the USSR.

Citizens of all other Union Republics enjoy on the territory of the Belorussian SSR equal rights with citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 19. The jurisdiction of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, embraces:

a) Adoption of the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR and control over its observance;

b) Establishment of the boundaries, and of the division into districts, of regions; submission of the formation of new regions constituting part of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for confirmation;

c) Legislation of the Belorussian SSR;

d) Maintenance of public order and safeguarding the rights of citizens;

e) Approval of the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR;

f) Approval of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR and of the report on its fulfilment;

g) Determination of state and local taxes, imposts and non-tax revenues in conformity with the laws of the USSR; direction of the fulfilment of the local budgets of the regions;

h) Direction of insurance and savings;

i) Administration of the banks, industrial, agricultural and trading enterprises and organizations subordinate to the Republic, as well as direction of local industry;

j) Control and superintendence of the condition and administration of enterprises subordinate to the Union;

k) Establishment of the procedure governing the use of land, mineral wealth, forests and waters;

l) Direction of dwelling houses and the municipal economy, dwelling house construction and the modernization of cities and other inhabited places;

m) Road building; direction of local transport and communications;

n) Labour legislation;

o) Direction of social maintenance;

p) Direction of elementary, secondary and higher education;

q) Direction of the cultural, educational and scientific organizations and institutions of the Belorussian SSR, and administration of the cultural, educational and scientific organizations and institutions of all-Republican importance;

r) Direction of public health and administration of public health institutions of Republican importance;

s) Direction and organization of physical culture and sports;

t) Organization of the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR;

u) Granting the rights of citizenship of the Belorussian SSR;

v) Amnesty and pardon of citizens convicted by judicial organs of

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695 Art. 83. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is elected by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for a term of five years.

Art. 84. Regional courts are elected by regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies for a term of five years.

Art. 85. People's courts are elected by the citizens of the district on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot for a term of three years.

695 [563] Art. 86. Judicial proceedings in the Belorussian SSR are conducted in the Belorussian language, persons not knowing the language being guaranteed every opportunity of fully acquainting themselves with the material of the case through an interpreter and likewise the right to use their own language in court.

Art. 87. In all courts of the Belorussian SSR cases are heard in public, unless otherwise provided for by law, and the accused is guaranteed the right to be defended by counsel.

693 Art. 88. Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

Art. 89. Supreme supervisory power to ensure the strict observance of the law by all Ministries and institutions subordinated to them, as well as by officials and citizens within the territory of the Belorussian SSR generally, is exercised by the Procurator-General of the USSR directly and also through the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 90. The Procurator of the Belorussian SSR and the regional procurators are appointed by the Procurator-General of the USSR for a term of five years.

Art. 91. District and city procurators are appointed by the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR, subject to the approval of the Procurator-General of the USSR, for a term of five years.

Art. 92. The organs of the Procurator's Office perform their functions independently of any local organs whatsoever, being subordinate solely to the Procurator-General of the USSR.

Chapter VIII. Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

461 641 Art. 93. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

Art. 94. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to rest and leisure.

The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the establishment of an eight-hour working day for factory and office workers, the reduction of the working day to seven or six hours for arduous trades and to four hours in shops where working conditions are particularly arduous, by the institution of annual vacations with full pay for factory and office workers and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest-homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people.

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644 Art. 96. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness and disability.

[657] This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[871] Art. 96. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for outstanding students in higher educational institutions; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

[806] Art. 97. Women in the Belorussian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[563] Art. 98. Equality of rights of citizens of the Belorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 99. In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Belorussian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens.

Art. 100. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed by law:

(a) Freedom of speech;
(b) Freedom of the press;
(c) Freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
(d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

575 641 Art. 101. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organizational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Belorussian SSR are ensured the right to unite in public organizations -- trade unions, co-operative associations, youth organizations,

575 641 sport and defence organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state.

[694] Art. 102. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 103. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 104. The Belorussian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

Art. 105. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[421] [685] Art. 106. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to safeguard and strengthen public socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 107. Universal military service is law.

Military service in the armed forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

[68] Art. 108. To defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR. Treason to the country -- violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage -- is punishable with all severity of law as the most heinous of crimes.

Chapter IX. The Electoral System

666 Art. 109. Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the regional, district, city, settlement and rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- are chosen by the electors on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot.

Art. 110. Elections of deputies are universal: all citizens of the Belorussian SSR who have reached the age of 18, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights.

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166 [64] Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR who has reached the age of 21, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualification, social origin, property status or past activities, has the right to be elected as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 111. Elections of deputies are equal: each citizen has one vote; all citizens participate in elections on an equal footing.

[52] Art. 112. Women have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with men.

Art. 113. Citizens serving in the armed forces of the USSR have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens.

Art. 114. Elections of deputies are direct: all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from rural and city Soviets of Working People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, inclusive, are elected by the citizens by direct vote.

Art. 115. Voting at elections of deputies is secret.

Art. 116. Candidates for election are nominated according to electoral areas.

The right to nominate candidates is secured to public organizations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organizations and cultural societies.

Art. 117. It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electors on his work and on the work of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies, and he is liable to be recalled at any time upon a decision of a majority of the electors in the manner established by law.

Art. 118. Elections of deputies to Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR are held by election districts on the following basis:

in elections to regional Soviets - one deputy for every 10,000 to 15,000 of the population, depending upon its size;

in elections to district Soviets - one deputy for every 1,000 of the population; in a district whose population does not exceed 25,000, twenty-five deputies are elected, and in a district whose population exceeds 60,000, not more than sixty deputies are elected;

in elections to city Soviets or city district Soviets - one deputy for every 300 to 1,000 of the population, depending upon its size; in a city or city district whose population does not exceed 12,000, thirty-five deputies are elected;

in elections to village or settlement Soviets - one deputy for every 100 of the population; in a village or settlement whose population does not exceed 1,000, nine deputies are elected, and where the population exceeds 2,500, not more than twenty-five deputies.

The basis of representation for each regional, district, city, village and settlement Soviet of Working People's Deputies is fixed in the Ordinance Concerning Elections to Regional, District, City, Village and Settlement Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR, within the range of the bases of representation indicated in the present article.